

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)  
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**INTRODUCTION**

This plan describes Connecticut's programs that furnish financial assistance and services to needy families in a manner to fulfill the purposes of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Connecticut administers a variety of programs through a number of state agencies under the TANF program. Each of the programs is designed to meet at least one of the following purposes of TANF.

1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or the homes of relatives.
2. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.
3. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies.
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

The plan is for the federal fiscal years of 2003, 2004, and 2005.

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**Overview of Connecticut's TANF Programs**

**Sec. 402 (a)(1)(A)**

**(i) – This part outlines how the state intends to conduct a program, designed to serve all political subdivisions in the state (not necessarily in a uniform manner), that provides assistance to needy families with (or expecting) children and provides parents with job preparation, work, and support services to enable them to leave the program and become self-sufficient.**

Connecticut's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides assistance to needy families and pregnant women meeting eligibility criteria in all political subdivisions of the state. Assistance for basic needs is provided to needy families through the Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) component of the Jobs First program. Jobs First also provides assistance through payments for Safety Net basic needs.

Assistance also is provided to needy families for various rental assistance programs and foster care maintenance. Safety Net, Transitional Rental Assistance and TFA for two parent households are separate state programs.

Although the eligibility criteria (including income and asset limits) vary from program to program, a family must meet the definition of a needy family to qualify for any of these programs. Connecticut defines a needy family as a family with gross income less than 75% of Connecticut's median income level. The family must include a dependent child and a caretaker relative.

The ultimate goal of Connecticut's TANF programs is to provide assistance to needy families to enable them to move out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.

A dependent child must be either less than 18 years of age, 18 years of age and attending secondary school or its equivalent, or under age 24 and attending a post secondary school and considered a dependent student through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) process.

A caretaker relative is a relative who cares for and supervises the dependent child. The caretaker may be a parent or other person related by blood, through adoption or marriage to a relative or another adult acting in loco parentis.

A needy parent is a parent of a child who is a member of a needy family. The parent may be the custodial or non-custodial parent.

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**FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**This part outlines TANF programs that provide assistance to needy families.**

**Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)** - The Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) component of Jobs First is an employment focused, time limited assistance program based on the assumption that welfare should be a temporary program of assistance and it is better to work than to be on welfare. Recipients are encouraged to assume personal responsibility for their economic self-sufficiency. Unless they meet exemption criteria, adults are required to seek and retain employment if it is available. Recipients unable to secure employment without intervention from the department will receive services, including education and training, that will assist them in becoming employed.

The TFA program attempts to direct participants to employment sufficient to move them off assistance within twenty-one months. The program contains many features that support this objective. The asset limit is \$3,000 so families may set aside money for emergencies. Families are allowed to own a reliable car to seek employment, to travel to and from work, or to transport a handicapped family member. To be excluded, the family's equity in the vehicle must not exceed \$9,500 or the vehicle must be used to transport a handicapped family member. Earned income of recipients is totally excluded up to the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Once earnings reach the FPL, the family becomes ineligible for assistance. Child care and transportation benefits are provided in order to enable individuals to prepare for, obtain and retain employment.

If a family member refuses to participate in Employment Services activities the family is penalized through grant reduction. Employment Services and benefits to support required activities are provided through Connecticut's Department of Labor.

If the family has made a good faith effort to comply with the employment activities but still has income below the payment standard at the end of twenty-one months of assistance, a six-month extension of benefits may be given. Extensions may also be given to families who have encountered circumstances beyond their control such as domestic violence. To qualify for an extension the family's income cannot exceed the payment standard corresponding to the size of the family.

There is no limit on the number of extensions a family may receive. However, the state imposes a 60 month time limit and families cannot receive more than

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two extensions to the twenty-one month time limit except when all adults meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The adult is precluded from obtaining or maintaining employment due to domestic violence or another circumstance beyond his or her control, or
- Despite working thirty-five or more hours per week, earning at least the minimum wage, the adult earns less than the family's TFA payment standard, or
- The adult is employed and working less than thirty-five hours per week due to (1) a documented medical impairment that limits his/her hours of work, or (2) the need to care for a disabled member of the household; or
- The adult has two or more substantiated barriers to employment such as the lack of available child care, substance abuse or addiction, severe mental or physical health problems, one or more severe learning disabilities, domestic violence, or a child who has a serious physical or behavioral health problem,

If each adult in the family meets at least one of the following exemption criteria, the family is not subject to the state time limits. These exemptions do not apply to the federal time limit. A person is exempt if he or she is incapacitated; age 60 or older; responsible for the care of an incapacitated family member; a non-parent caretaker relative who does not receive assistance; caring for a child under the age of one who is not subject to the family cap; pregnant if a physician has certified that she is unable to work; or unemployable. A six week exemption is also given when a pregnancy ends. This exemption may be extended if a medical professional certifies that the person is unable to work. Minor parents attending and satisfactorily completing high school or high school equivalency programs and their children are exempt from the time limit. However, unmarried minor parents who are not attending and who have not completed high school or its equivalent are not eligible for benefits.

In addition to a family that includes a member who has been battered or subject to extreme cruelty, a family that is exempt from the twenty-one month time limit is exempt from the state's 60 month time limit. Also, these families are considered hardship cases for the sixty month limit of TANF funded benefits.

Other features of the TFA program include the following: Additional assistance for a child born to a family receiving assistance is one half of what it would normally be. Minor parents are required to live with their parents or other adults.



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Any relative may receive assistance for a child. In addition, legal guardians and others acting in loco parentis may receive such assistance. Pregnant women are eligible for assistance throughout the entire pregnancy. Children are eligible for assistance until they reach age 19 as long as they are still attending high school or its equivalent.

All adult members and minor parents who are caretaker relatives are required to participate in the digital imaging process. At the time of application, an electronic image of the person's index fingers is taken and matched with a computer database of all other recipients to determine if the person is receiving assistance under another name.

The TFA benefit levels vary throughout the state based on the average cost of rent in each area. There are three regions in the state each with a different benefit level. The benefit levels and the towns covered by each level are described in Addendum A.

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**Child Care Assistance for Unemployed Persons** - Connecticut provides child care assistance to TFA family members preparing for employment through Jobs First Employment Services activities. Child care assistance is also provided to teen parents who need child care while completing high school.

Child care assistance payments are based on several factors including: the local market rate, the child care setting, the number of hours care is needed, the age of the child and the special needs of the child. Unemployed families are not required to pay a family fee.

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**Foster Care Maintenance** - Connecticut provides foster care maintenance to children who are in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). TANF covers the portion of the maintenance services that were authorized under the prior Emergency Assistance (EAF) program for clients who would have qualified for Emergency Assistance under that prior program. Benefits are funded by the TANF for up to twelve months of care. Benefits for less than five months are non-assistance benefits. (See Protective Services for Children under the Services and Non-Assistance Programs section.) For children who remain in foster care for more than four months, months five through twelve are considered assistance.

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**Rental Assistance program (RAP)** - Housing assistance is available to TFA recipients through the Rental Assistance Program (RAP). This certificate program provides rental subsidies to low-income families. RAP certificates are portable and may be used in any city or town within Connecticut. The income limit for RAP is 50% of the state's median income level. Federal TANF funds are used to cover the cost of RAP subsidies provided to recipients of TFA and are funded by federal TANF funds.

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**FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS  
MOE PROGRAMS**

**This part outlines programs that provide assistance to needy families that utilize state maintenance of effort (MOE) funds.**

**Aliens** - Connecticut provides TFA to legal aliens who have resided in the state for at least six months prior to the date of application. Eligibility criteria and benefit levels for aliens are the same as they are for citizens.

Segregated state MOE funds are used to provide cash assistance to qualified aliens and aliens paroled into the United States for less than one year under section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality who do not qualify for federal TANF benefits solely due to their alien status.

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**Energy Assistance** – Connecticut provides energy assistance to help to pay for heating costs for families with income below 150 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. This is a separate state program that utilizes state maintenance of effort funds to provide energy assistance to families who qualify for both TFA and the Energy Assistance program.

Households that are required to pay for heating costs separately from rent may receive basic benefits, crisis benefits and safety net benefits. Households with heat included in their rental payment receive a renter's benefit. Families with a member who is elderly, disabled or under the age of six are considered vulnerable households and qualify for higher basic benefits than other households. There is a limit on liquid assets of \$10,000 for homeowners and \$7,000 for non-homeowners. The chart below indicates the basic benefit levels available to families.

<u>POVERTY LEVEL GUIDELINES</u>	<u>VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS</u>	<u>NON-VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS</u>
Up to 100%	\$535	\$435
101% - 125%	\$435	\$335
125% - 150%	\$335	\$235

The benefit levels for renters are as follows:

<u>POVERTY LEVEL GUIDELINES</u>	<u>RENTER BENEFIT</u>
Up to 100%	\$90
101% - 125%	\$75
125% - 150%	\$60

Crisis benefits are provided to households that are unable to secure primary heat, causing a life-threatening situation. Up to \$200 is provided to purchase a deliverable fuel through crisis benefits.

Safety net assistance is provided to households that have exhausted crisis assistance benefits and are in a life-threatening situation. Up to \$200 per occurrence is provided to assist the household in obtaining shelter with adequate heat or, as a last resort, to purchase an emergency fuel delivery.

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**Non-hardship families who have received more than 60 months of TFA benefits** - Connecticut provides TFA benefits to families who have exhausted the federal 60 month limit on benefits, but have not exhausted the state's 60 month limit and who do not meet the state's hardship criteria. The exemption criteria for the state time limit is the same as the hardship criteria for the federal limit. When a family loses an exemption they also lose the hardship designation. The state will continue to provide benefits to these families until they reach the state's 60 month time limit. Eligibility criteria and benefit levels for these families are the same as they are for families who have not yet received 60 months of federal TANF benefits.

Segregated state MOE funds are used to provide TFA benefits to these families.

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**Two-Parent Households and Certain Exempt Households** – Connecticut provides assistance to two-parent families through a separate state program. This program also provides assistance to households that are exempt from the state's time limit due to any of the following reasons – Incapacity, caring for an incapacitated household member, being over the age of 60 or being unemployable. This program has the same eligibility criteria and pays benefits at the same level as TFA. Two-parent families also receive Employment Service benefits.



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**Transitional Rental Assistance (T-RAP)** – Families who exhaust 21 months of time-limited assistance and are not eligible for an extension because they have income over the payment standard, may qualify for rental assistance payments. There is an income limit of fifty percent of the state median income level. Rental assistance is available for up to twelve months. Due to limited funding, a lottery system is used to select eligible recipients.

T-RAP is administered by a housing agent whose services are contracted by DSS. The program's goal is to provide a monthly rental assistance payment to make safe, affordable housing available for needy families.

Eligible families must be former participants in the TFA program and an adult member of the household must be employed at the time of application. T-RAP offers a housing subsidy to participants living in privately owned rental property. The subsidy is equal to the difference between forty percent of the tenant's monthly income (minus certain allowances) and the state-set maximum rent (or twenty percent of the family's gross monthly income) whichever is greater.

The rent may exceed the maximum state-set rent only if the family remains in the current rental unit. The family is responsible for payment of the difference between the state-set maximum and the actual rent in addition to the income-based contribution. If a family moves to a new rental unit, the rent must not exceed the state-set maximum. All subsidized units must meet certain housing standards.

This is a separate state program that utilizes state maintenance of effort funds.

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**Temporary Rent Subsidy Program (TRSP)** - The Temporary Rent Subsidy Program (TRSP) provides rental subsidies to current and former recipients of Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), the state's family assistance program.

The Temporary Rental Subsidy Program has two components. The first provides subsidies to current TFA families for whom housing stability is a barrier to employment. The second component provides rental subsidies to families who have become ineligible for TFA due to program time limits and who have incomes less than the welfare payment standard. Participants must have at least one other barrier to employment and must have a reasonable likelihood of securing employment and becoming self-supporting if the housing barrier is removed.

The program has an income limit of 50% of Area Median Income and an absolute income limit of 75% of the State Median Income.

The program achieves both the first and second purposes of TANF by providing assistance to needy families and ending dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

This is a separate state program that utilizes state maintenance of effort funds.

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**Safety Net Basic Benefits** – Safety Net offers services and benefits to families who have exhausted the 21-month time limit of TFA benefits, are not eligible for an extension due to non-compliance with employment services requirements and have income below the payment standard for the appropriate family size. Safety Net benefits are provided through vouchers for food, direct vendor payments for shelter and other payments to third parties on behalf of the family. Not all families are entitled to all benefits.

Families must have income less than the TFA payment standard and assets less than TFA asset limit to qualify.

Assistance units referred for Safety Net Services receive an assessment to examine factors such as current employment status, assistance unit income, employment history and family risk factors. A target budget is established which reflects the income that the family needs to become self-sufficient. Assessment results are used to determine what benefits or services will be offered and the duration, frequency, and intensity of case management.

The benefits portion of this program is a separate state program utilizing state maintenance of effort funds.

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**SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**This part describes how Connecticut provides services and non-assistance benefits to needy families through TANF programs.**

**Adult Education** - Operated through the State Department of Education (SDE), the Adult Education program provides funds to school districts to provide services such as English as a Second Language (ESL), basic skills introduction, and high school completion.

These services are available to needy families who have gross family income at or below seventy-five percent of the State's Median Income.

This program helps to end the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

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**Child Care Assistance Programs** – Connecticut provides child care assistance to families receiving TFA to enable parents to work. In addition, Connecticut provides child care assistance to working families transitioning off TFA and non-TFA working families.

Initial eligibility for child care assistance is based on countable family income and the need for child care. At application, a family may be eligible if their countable income is below fifty percent of the state median income (SMI) related to family size. TFA benefits and child support received or paid by the family are not considered countable income. Once determined eligible, a family may receive child care assistance as long as their need for care continues and their countable income remains under the income limit. The income limit is set by the Commissioner of Social Services at either fifty or seventy-five percent of the state median income. There is no time limit on a family's eligibility for child care assistance.

Child care payment rates are based on several factors including: the local market rate, the child care setting, the number of hours care is needed, the age of the child and the special needs of the child. All working families are required to pay a portion of the approved child care assistance payment. This Family Fee, paid by the family directly to the child care provider, is calculated based on countable family income in accordance with the following scale.

<b><u>COUNTABLE FAMILY INCOME</u></b>	<b><u>FAMILY FEE</u></b>
Less than 20% of SMI	2%
20% to 30% of SMI	4%
30% to 40% of SMI	6%
40% to 50% of SMI	8%
50% or more of SMI	10%

These programs serve to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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**Child Care Facilities Loan Fund** - The Child Care Facilities Loan Fund provides loans to build or renovate child care facilities in order to expand the number of child care spaces targeted to families with income less than 75% of the state median income level.

This program serves to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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**Child Welfare Prevention and Intervention Services** - These services are provided when conditions exist requiring the intervention of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). These services include:

- substance abuse counseling and screening of a non-medical nature,
- 24-hour family preservation counseling to families in their homes,
- community-based prevention and treatment of child abuse,
- community-based case management for children and their families who are at-risk of being removed from their homes,
- outreach referral, and crisis intervention to families who are at-risk or have experienced abuse and neglect,
- support for families in which there is a child or adult victim of family violence,
- child-care of a therapeutic nature to enable children who have demonstrated emotional, behavioral, or neurological problems to remain in their homes,
- Investigations of reports of child abuse and neglect, and
- Case management and counseling supportive services for clients in subsidized housing programs.

Also included are services provided with funds from the children's Trust Fund such as parenting programs for first-time parents, Parents Anonymous groups, and other developmental and support services.

These services are offered on behalf of children under the age of 19 who are members of families with a gross income of seventy-five percent or less than the State Median Income (SMI).

These services enable needy families to care for their children in their own homes or in the homes of relatives or were authorized through the Emergency Assistance program described in Connecticut's IV-A State Plan in effect on September 30, 1995.

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**Children and Youth Development Programs** - The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) funds a variety of prevention and early intervention services for Connecticut youth including a parenting program for teens, a parenting program for adults, and an after-school mentoring program. There are no income guidelines for this program.

This program prevents and reduces the incidence of out-of-wedlock births by providing counseling and guidance on at-risk behaviors that can and have led to out-of-wedlock pregnancies.



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**Department of Correction Addiction Treatment Services** – The Department of Correction (DOC) provides addiction services to clients who have varying levels of needs, from basic addiction education to intensive counseling. TANF claiming is limited to costs of non-medical services provided to clients who are non-custodial parents. By providing addiction treatment to non-custodial parents, the program helps them become clean and sober, which ultimately will enable them to become contributing members of the family.

This program encourages the formation and maintenance of two parent families.

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**Department of Correction Education and Training Services** – The Department of Correction (DOC) provides education and training services that prepare clients to develop job skills and ultimately secure employment. TANF claiming is limited to costs related to services provided to clients who are non-custodial parents. By providing education and training services to non-custodial parents, the program helps them obtain the skills and ultimately jobs that will enable them to be contributing members of their families.

This program encourages the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

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**Department of Labor First Sanction Intervention Program** – This program is designed to identify and immediately address barriers to employment as soon as a family is sanctioned for non-compliance with Jobs First Employment Services requirements. The goal is to increase successful employment outcomes and reduce the likelihood of ongoing dependency of the Jobs first program. Also clients with serious conditions are identified and an evaluation for an incapacity exemption from the time-limited program is made.

These programs serve to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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**Diversion** - Connecticut's diversion program became effective October 1, 1998. This program provides qualifying applicants with up to three times the amount the family would receive each month under the Jobs First program. Applicants are screened to determine if a lump sum payment can address the issue that compelled them to apply for assistance. Applicants must be determined to be otherwise eligible for Jobs First assistance, meet the program profile characteristics and have short-term needs that, if provided, will prevent the need for ongoing cash assistance.

To meet the program profile characteristics a person must be employed or have a job offer that will begin within three months, have a solid work history, or have marketable job skills that will lead to employment.

After eligibility is determined, applicants have three working days to refuse diversion and accept full assistance. Applicants subject to the time limit who accept diversion payments are treated as if they have received three months of Jobs First cash assistance. For families subject to the time limit, three months is deducted from their twenty-one month time limit. Medicaid eligibility under section 1931 is also explored at the time of application. If a family member is employed when 1931 eligibility ends, transitional Medicaid is given for twenty-four additional months. The family also may qualify for childcare benefits.

This program serves to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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**Early Intervention Program** – This program is designed to identify and immediately address barriers to employment as part of the initial Jobs First Employment Services assessment process. The goal is to increase successful employment outcomes and reduce the likelihood of ongoing dependency of the Jobs First program. Also clients with serious conditions are identified and an evaluation for an incapacity exemption from the time-limited program is made.

These programs serve to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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**Employment Services** - The state provides employment services to all recipients of Temporary Family Assistance (TFA). Employment services are also provided to those who are participating in an employment service activity authorized by their employment plan at the time of becoming ineligible for TFA until they complete that activity. The state refers to these employment services as Jobs First Employment Services. The Connecticut Department of Labor (DOL) administers Jobs First Employment Services through *CT Works*. *CT Works* is a partnership of the CT Department of Labor, the Regional Workforce Development Boards (RWDB's), and other state and local agencies, including the Department of Social Services.

Jobs First Employment Services are provided to adults or minor parents in families applying for or receiving Temporary Family Assistance funded by TANF, and to Temporary Family Assistance two-parent families funded as a separate state program. All TFA applicants and recipients are eligible for employment services even if they are not required to participate by the regulations governing the TFA program. If a TANF funded TFA recipient is in an employment service activity authorized by the employment plan at the time of becoming ineligible for TFA, employment services continue until completion of that activity, provided the individual remains part of a needy family with income under 75% of the state's median income level. Similarly, services to participants in two-parent families who become ineligible for TFA while in an authorized activity will continue until the completion of that activity.

The goals of the Jobs First Employment Services program are as follows:

1. Enable TFA participants, through employment, to become independent from cash assistance by the end of the 21-month time limit established by state law;
2. Enable TFA participants who become independent from cash assistance to remain employed and independent of TFA; and
3. Ensure that federally established participation rates are met through employment of TFA participants and engagement in other countable TANF work activities deemed appropriate based on assessments of clients' needs.

Operating Principles

1. The primary focus of the Jobs First Employment Services Program is to assist participants to become independent of assistance through employment.
2. Every participant is assigned to activities that will enable him/her to become and remain independent of TFA. Whenever possible, activities are combined in a way that will meet the federally established participation rates.

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3. Each service delivery area manages its caseload in such a way as to meet the state target levels for the participation rates.
4. An individualized employment plan based on assessment of skills, abilities, work experience, education level, aptitudes, interests and program goals is developed for every participant. The individual employment plans for parents in a two-parent family are coordinated with each other in order to meet program goals. The combination of both parents' plans constitutes a plan for the family.
5. If, based on the assessment, it is determined that the family is capable within the first 21 months or anytime during an extension period of obtaining employment at earnings equal to the Federal Poverty Level for their family size, the participant (participants) are required to find and/or maintain employment at the Federal Poverty Level as soon as possible.
6. If it is determined that the family cannot obtain earnings at the Federal Poverty Level (in the case of a two-parent family, both parents wages or potential wages are combined) without further training and/or education, the participant/s are assigned work, education and/or training activities that will maximize the family's income level within the first 21 months of assistance. For participants in extensions, work, education and/or training activities that will maximize the family income level as soon as possible are assigned. Whenever possible, employment is combined with education and training in such a way that the combination is countable toward the federally established participation rate.
7. As long as consistent with the program goals, employment plan activities are based on the participant's interests, ability, availability of resources and labor market demands.
8. If it is evident that the family will not be able to become or remain independent of TFA through current employment or future employment that is secured (such as seasonal employment) without additional education and/or training, new or additional activities designed to increase the family income may be assigned, which may preclude continuation of existing employment or self-employment.
9. These operating principles apply to all participants according to their needs, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

Type of Employment Services

Connecticut's Jobs First Employment Services is a "balanced work first" program. This means that if the welfare recipient is capable of going to work, he or she is

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expected to work. It also means that if welfare recipients are capable of working, but need education or training to improve earnings to better support their families, they will generally be expected to work while receiving that training. In some cases, work follows immediately upon completion of intensive, short-term training or education.

To attain all three program goals, Jobs First Employment Services include a combination of job search, employment, education, training and support services. The combination of services varies with each individual participant. This balance of employment activity with other services utilizes individual strengths and resources while addressing employment-related needs. This balanced work first approach ensures that participants will not only become independent, but will remain independent from assistance while the federal participation rates are met.

Each participant, including volunteers, may receive employment services that include, but are not limited to the following: orientation, assessment, case management, employment plan development, barrier resolution, employment related education and training programs, job search skill training, job placement services, case management, support services (such as Special Benefits), retention services, and re-employment services.

Post-secondary education (two and four year degree programs) is not an allowable Jobs First employment service. Self-initiated participation in such educational programs may co-exist with approved plan activities if funded with other resources, to the extent that such enrollment does not preclude participation in required plan activities.

Entry into Jobs First Employment Services

Initial entry into the Jobs First Employment Services Program is through a referral from the Department of Social Services (DSS). DSS conducts a service needs assessment of the TFA recipient during or soon after the initial TFA intake interview. The service needs assessment includes gathering information from the recipients on their education, employment and training history; time on assistance and social service needs. The results of the human needs assessment are then forwarded to the local *CT Works* office.

*CT Works* Intake

Intake sessions include an orientation, employability assessment, initial employment plan development, eligibility determination for separately funded employment programs, assignment of a case manager and assignment to initial employment plan activities by either Regional Workforce Development Board (RWDB) staff and/or case managers.



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All new participants for employment services must attend an intake session. However, special accommodations are made for participants who cannot attend the group sessions due to their employment schedule. These participants are scheduled for separate individual appointments at times that do not interfere with work hours. If necessary, the intake session can be conducted in a combination of phone interviews and mailed correspondence. Participants are not required to miss work, training or a job interview to attend any employment services activity.

Every participant leaves the intake session with a clear understanding of the next step in his/her employment plan, the name and phone number of his/her case manager and a copy of his/her employment plan.

Case Management

After intake into *CT Works*, the assigned case manager in conjunction with the participant completes the employment plan. The case manager arranges for services, and tracks and monitors the participant to ensure progression towards independence from cash assistance. If the participant does not comply with the provisions of the employment plan without good cause, the case manager refers the participant to the DSS for conciliation and possible sanctioning.

Special Benefits and Childcare Assistance

To facilitate maximum participation, TFA applicants or recipients who participate in employment services are supported by special benefit payments.

Transportation benefits are provided to participants of regular, on-going employment services activities other than unsubsidized employment. Payment is made for bus fares or mileage for driving private automobiles. Bus fares are as charged, not to exceed ten dollars per day. Payment for mileage for private automobiles is two dollars for up to the first ten miles, and twenty cents per mile after that up to a maximum of fifty miles per day.

A participation allowance which is intended to assist participants with transportation and baby-sitting expenses is provided for short-term, intermittent employment services activities that last no longer than five consecutive days. Payment is ten dollars per day up to a maximum of fifty dollars in the month.

Ongoing childcare assistance is provided through DSS's Child Care Assistance Program.

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**Family Resource Centers** – Operated through the State Department of Education, these centers are designed to promote comprehensive, integrated, community-based systems of family support and child development. There are no income or asset limits for this program.

These services encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families and prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births.

Family Resource Centers provide or collaborate with existing agencies to operate full-time preschool childcare, school-age childcare, families-in-training (including home visiting and monitoring of child development for new and expectant parents), adult education, support and training for family daycare providers, positive youth development services, and resource and referral services.

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**Fatherhood Initiative** – Connecticut's fatherhood initiative is a broad-based, statewide program led by the Department of Social Services that focuses on changing the systems that can improve fathers' ability to be fully and positively involved in the lives of their children.

The program's objectives are as follows –

- Promote public education concerning the financial and emotional responsibilities of fatherhood
- Assist men in preparing for the legal, financial and emotional responsibilities of fatherhood
- Promote the establishment of paternity at childbirth
- Encourage fathers, regardless of marital status, to foster their emotional connection to and financial support of their children
- Establish support mechanisms for fathers in their relationship with their children, regardless of their marital and financial status
- Integrate state and local services available for families

This program encourages the formation and maintenance of two parent families.

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**Governor's Prevention Partnership** - The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) offers grants for initiatives to provide training to mentors of at-risk youth. There are no income guidelines for this program.

This program helps reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births because it provides training to mentors on how to address and counsel youth against at-risk behaviors such as out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

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**Grants to Boys and Girls Clubs** - The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) funds the Boys and Girls Clubs to offer support services such as mentoring, outreach to high-risk girls, increased hours of operation, and other support services. There are no income guidelines for this program.

This program helps prevent the incidence of out-of-wedlock births by targeting girls who have demonstrated at-risk behaviors that can lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancies and by offering after-school activities that keep students occupied productively.

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**Grants for Mental Health Services** - The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) provides grants to mental health providers to offer mental health services such as case management, vocational rehabilitation, and crisis intervention. TANF funding is available for appropriate non-medical counseling services (e.g. mental health services, anger management counseling, and other counseling services) to members of families with gross income at or below seventy-five percent of State Median Income.

This program helps end the dependence of “needy parents” by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage and reducing barriers to employment and promoting self-sufficiency.

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**Inter-District Cooperative Grants** - The State Department of Education (SDE) funds school districts to offer programs that expand and enrich student's educational experience above and beyond basic education and also encourage diversity. The types of programs funded include after-school and extended year enrichment programs and mentoring programs. There are no income guidelines for this program.

These services prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births because they address at-risk behaviors that can lead to out-of-wedlock births.

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**Jobs Funnel** - The Office of Workforce Development funds the Hartford Construction Jobs Initiative (HCJI), part of the Jobs Funnel program, to provide Hartford city residents with the recruitment, assessment, training, job placement, and support services for people who want to pursue construction related careers. The program offers an initial training followed by assistance in finding employment in apprenticeships and other jobs in the Hartford area.

Services for program participants who are members of families with dependent children, U.S. citizens, and have income at or below 75 percent of the State Median Income are funded by the TANF program.

This program helps end the dependence of needy parents by promoting work, job preparation, and marriage. Integral to the program are the outreach, assessment, and support services provided by community-based organizations. By providing these services, the goal of the program is to help participants become more job-ready so as to prevent or end their dependence on public assistance.



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**LEAP Program** - The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) funds the Leadership, Education, Athletics in Partnership (LEAP) program. This program provides neighborhood-based education and mentoring programs that match low-income children, ages 7 to 14, with high school and college student counselors. The children meet with their mentors after school and during the summer.

This program helps to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births.

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**Medical Assistance for Aliens** - Connecticut provides medical assistance to legal aliens who have resided in the state for at least six months prior to the date of application. The eligibility criteria for aliens are the same as they are for citizens.

Segregated state MOE funds are used to provide medical benefits to qualified aliens and aliens paroled into the United States for less than one year under section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality who do not qualify for federal medical benefits solely due to their alien status. Medical assistance is provided to families with income under 300% of the federal poverty level.

This program serves to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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**Neighborhood Youth Centers** - The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) offers competitive grants to priority cities to create and maintain neighborhood youth centers. The grantees must use the funds to provide skill development training, tutoring, parental involvement, and other supportive services. These services take place during after-school hours. There are no income guidelines for this program.

This program prevents and reduces the incidence of out-of-wedlock births.

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**Outreach** – These services include activities that provide information about TANF and related services or programs for which low income families might be eligible, including Medicaid and SCHIP.

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**Priority School Districts, Extended Hours, Transitional School Districts -**

The State Department of Education provides funds to priority school districts and transitional school districts, the neediest schools in the state, to fund extended day programs, summer programs, parent involvement programs, drop-out prevention, parental involvement and alternative programs for students. These services are offered through extended hours and extended year programs. These programs are targeted to poor school districts and offer support services outside of basic education that are designed to foster success and result in enhanced opportunities for children as they mature into adulthood.

The services offered under these programs are targeted to children of needy families, although services are provided to all children within the school district who would benefit by receiving the service.

The services provided help prevent the incidence of out-of-wedlock births and to promote the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

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**Protective Services for Children** – These services are provided when conditions exist requiring the intervention of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Services or payment for services for the child or family is provided to deal with the conditions that caused the need for the services. The services provided are those identified by DCF needed to meet the needs of the child. These include foster care maintenance payments for temporary placement outside of the home such as the Safe Homes program as well as foster care payments for up to four months. Also included are case management services for preventive services, court-related activities, and foster care.

These services were authorized through the Emergency Assistance program described in Connecticut's IV-A State Plan in effect on September 30, 1995 and to enable children of needy families to remain in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

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**Safe Learning Grants** - The State Department of Education (SDE) funds school districts to develop programs that create safe school environments in which students can learn without fear of harm. The programs target students who have demonstrated at-risk behaviors, establish rules of safety and activities that encourage respect, and decrease early youth at-risk behaviors. The funds can be used to establish after-school enrichment programs that develop crisis and violence prevention policies. There are no income guidelines for this program.

These services prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births by targeting students who have demonstrated at-risk behaviors that can lead to out-of-wedlock births.

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**Safety Net Services-** Safety Net services are available to families who have exhausted the 21-month time limit of TFA benefits, are not eligible for an extension due to non-compliance with employment services requirements and have income below the payment standard for the appropriate family size. This program works to 1) minimize the likelihood of harm to the children, 2) stabilize families and assist with access to resources to strengthen parenting skills and protect children and 3) assist families to attain and maintain employment through the identification and amelioration of existing psychological, personal and structural barriers.

Services provided include the following.

- Home based outreach services during non-traditional hours (early mornings and weekends)
- Intensive family support services that are based on mutual trust and respect
- Availability of a regional clinical staff that is bilingual, bicultural, and available for in-home or office based clinical assessments, referrals and follow-up
- Comprehensive, qualitative assessment of family strengths and risk factors using a unique tool designed for the program
- Family focus and environmental systems approach

This program is designed to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.



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**School Readiness** – The initiative is designed to ensure that children from low-income families have access to high-quality early learning experiences by combining the strengths and resources of the public and private child care and school systems. Funds are made available to School Readiness Councils in communities with large numbers of low-income children. The Councils assess community needs, identify gaps, and allocate funds. Each Council is allocated funds to increase the number of 3- and 4-year old children served in early care and education programs and to improve the quality of those services. The Councils are required to ensure that full-day early childhood care and education services are available year-round. Additionally, funds are made available on a statewide basis to train new early childhood teachers.

The policy goal of the program is that 60% of the families must have earnings less than 75% of the state median income. Also, 60% of the families must be working full-time.

These services prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births.

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**Substance Abuse Services** -The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) offers grants to providers of substance abuse services to pregnant women, adolescents, and youth. TANF funding is available for non-medical substance or alcohol abuse services, including room and board costs at residential treatment programs provided to families with gross income at or below seventy-five percent of State Median Income.

These services help to end the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage and by preventing and reducing the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

In addition, TANF funding is available for promotional activities such as “Drugs Don’t Work” that target children to discourage them from trying illegal substances. There are no income guidelines for public service campaigns since it would not be possible to identify the recipients of these services. However, the entire purpose of the campaign is reasonably calculated to support the State’s TANF program.

This program serves to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births. By targeting children with a substance abuse campaign, this program seeks to help children avoid dependence on substances that can lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

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**Teen Pregnancy Prevention** -The Department of Social Services funds twelve pregnancy prevention programs that include a component that requires the grantees to work more intensively with at risk teens of both sexes. Programs include components to comprehensively address family issues including health, education and other life issues.

The department has contracted with a program evaluator to ascertain which program methods, or aspects of different programs are most effective. The department has also contracted with the University of Connecticut Health Center to act as coordinator of the various teenage pregnancy prevention efforts across the state. In this capacity, the health center provides technical assistance and information and works with state agencies to minimize duplicated efforts and to secure current data.

The department worked with the Department of Public Health to include the collection of marital status information on birth certificates to allow more accurate data collection on out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Numerical goals were established in collaboration with the Connecticut Progress Council to reduce the number of out-of-wedlock births. The Progress Council has a specific goal of reducing the teen pregnancy rate to twenty-three births per one thousand girls aged 15 to 17. (The Connecticut Progress Council was created under state law to establish goals for the future and benchmarks to measure the state's progress in meeting them.)

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**Transportation Programs** – Connecticut funds programs in each of its five regions to assist families in overcoming barriers to employment due to lack of transportation. Each of the region's programs is designed to meet the needs of the families in their area. Initiatives include new bus routes to target areas with employment opportunities that were previously inaccessible by public transportation; extended hours of bus service to provide transportation for individuals working in the evenings; coordination with Connecticut's Rideshare Company to provide vans where transportation gaps exist; and providing a guaranteed free ride home for participants in the case of illness or a family emergency. The income limit is 75% of the state's median income level. These funds may be used as a match for the Federal Job Access and Reverse Commute grant.

The Good News Garage of Connecticut accepts donated used vehicles, repairs them and passes them on to recipients of Temporary Family Assistance (TFA). Recipients of vehicles from the Good News Garage are TFA recipients who, without a vehicle, would not be able to obtain or maintain employment because of a lack of transportation.

These programs serve to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

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**Tuancy Prevention** - The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) funds three school districts (Hartford, Windham, and Danbury) to provide support services such as classes on parenting skills, mentoring, coordination and tracking, and other family support services. There are no income guidelines for this program.

This program helps prevent the incidence of out-of-wedlock births by providing counseling and other support services to help avoid at-risk behaviors such as out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

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**Violence Reduction Program** - The Department of Social Services (DSS) funds the University of Connecticut School of Social Work to administer and provide a violence reduction mediation program in at least two middle schools. The program works with small groups of ten to fifteen students at each school who are at risk of violent behavior or who are known for their violent or aggressive disruptions. The criteria for selection and participation in this program are the exhibition of violent or excessive aggressive behavior in schools and students who are at risk of expulsion because of violent behavior. There are no income guidelines for this program.

This program helps reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births in that it is a program that aims to help students stay in school.

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**Young Parents Program** - The State Department of Education (SDE) provides funds for programs to help teen parents stay in school. The funds are used to cover transportation costs for teen parents and their children to and from school and child-care facilities. The funds are also used to operate parenting education programs and prevention programs for teens that are at-risk of becoming teen parents. There are no income guidelines for this program.

These services prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births because programs that help teens stay in school support this purpose (i.e. purpose 3) of the TANF program.

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**Youth Services Bureau** - The State Department of Education (SDE) grants funds to school districts to support at-risk youth in their communities by addressing issues related to social development, mental health, and physical well-being. The bureaus provide counseling on at-risk behaviors such as out-of-wedlock births. There are no income guidelines for this program. Federal TANF funds are utilized for these services.

These services prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock births.



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**Connecticut Aid to Public College Students Grant Program** - The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Department of Higher Education to fund the Connecticut Aid to Public College Students Grant Program. The fundamental objective of this program is to provide grants, which are not paid back by the student, that fill a financial need for students trying to pursue a better education and become economically better off. There is a cause and effect relationship between higher education and the ability to obtain a job with a livable wage and the opportunity for advancement. The basis of selection for these grants is financial need, therefore, they are not available to everyone pursuing a post-secondary education.

The grant payments made to independent undergraduate students with at least one child and income level below 75% of the state median income are funded under the TANF program.

This program is in support of the second purpose of the TANF program, which is to end the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

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**Connecticut Independent College Student Grant Program** - The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Department of Higher Education to fund the Connecticut Independent College Student Grant Program. The fundamental objective of this program is to provide grants, which are not paid back by the student, that fill a financial need for students trying to pursue a better education and become economically better off. There is a cause and effect relationship between higher education and the ability to obtain a job with a livable wage and the opportunity for advancement. The basis of selection for these grants is financial need, therefore, they are not available to everyone pursuing a post-secondary education.

The grant payments made to independent undergraduate students with at least one child and income level below 75% of the state median income are funded under the TANF program.

This program is in support of the second purpose of the TANF program, which is to end the dependence of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage.

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**Judicial Branch Counseling Services Program**-The Judicial Branch provides mental health counseling services in the three state detention centers. Judicial contracts with private providers for services such as: psychiatric assessment, psychotropic medication management, licensed clinical social work assessment and treatment, substance abuse assessment and short-term treatment and psycho-education for the child and the parent(s). The assessment and counseling services are claimed under TANF and the medical services are not.

The services provided through this program help to prevent out of wedlock births (purpose 3 of TANF). The mental health and substance abuse services available in the state detention centers provide much needed assessment and early intervention for youths presenting with these types of issues. The research literature shows that children placed in detention for delinquent behavior are at high-risk for further involvement with the criminal justice system. High-risk adolescents involved with the court are also at high-risk or already have a history of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, school failure and unemployment. The adolescent detention population is disproportionately over-represented by children from high conflict families and the children can often continue in the family legacy of family instability.

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**Pregnancy Healthline** – This program provides referrals to women of child-bearing age and pregnant women and families for a range of services such as AIDS/HIV related services, health and safety information, pediatric and family health care, and mental health counseling. This program provides people with access to information and services that can lead to better awareness of health and safety issues, issues that can lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancies or to family pressures that can cause family dissolution.

This program supports the third purpose of the TANF program, which is to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and the fourth purpose of the TANF program which is to promote the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. This program has no income criteria.

The effective date of this program is 10/1/01.

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**Special Population Program** - The Special Population Program, operated out of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, was created to serve as a bridge for children leaving the care of the Department of Children and Families who lacked independent living skills and who had mental health issues. The program specifically targets clients who: 1) have pervasive developmental disorders and have demonstrated at-risk behaviors, and 2) have mental health issues and have experienced prior traumas and have demonstrated a history of sexually aggressive behavior. The counseling services provided to these youth will help them to address their at-risk behaviors, which in turn, could reduce and prevent the incidence of future out-of-wedlock pregnancies. In addition, it can sometimes be difficult for youth with pervasive developmental disorders to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, which can lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

This program is in support of the third purpose of the TANF program, which is to reduce and prevent the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Since this program qualifies for TANF under purpose 3, it can be provided to both needy and non-needy families and individuals.

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**Summer Youth Extended Day** - Summer School programs for students in Priority School Districts are required by legislation for several groups of students including: kindergarten students in need of additional instruction in reading readiness; students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade who fail to meet the standard on the 4<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade mastery examination; and students identified as being at risk of failing to learn to read. Summer school programs are supported by SDE grant funds to local boards of education for priority school districts.

The summer school programs include educational, enrichment, and recreational components. The TANF allowable expenditures are only those costs associated with services provided after regular summer school hours or, in the SDE vernacular, in "extended day" programs. ACF guidance has recognized the value of after school programs in reducing the opportunity for youth to engage in at-risk behaviors.

This program supports the third purpose of the TANF program, which is to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies. This program has no income criteria. Income criteria are not required.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Alternative to Detention Program (ADP)** - The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to fund the Alternative to Detention Program (ADP). ADPs target juveniles who have been ordered into a Juvenile Detention Center to determine if they meet the criteria for referral to an alternative program. Juveniles chosen for the ADP program are supervised in the form of community-based day programming and short-term residential programs. Both the residential (any residential costs incurred by this program are excluded from the TANF claim) and the non-residential components of the program provide a wide array of services, seven days each week. Programming includes: counseling, substance abuse education and treatment, volunteer service, recreational/physical fitness activities, life skills development, family and peer relationships, anger management, values clarification, problem solving, sexuality, parenting, and accepting responsibility for behaviors. There are no income guidelines for this program. There are no income guidelines for this program. This program is utilizes federal TANF funds.

This program is in support of the third purpose of the TANF program, because it provides services that address the at-risk behaviors and self-esteem issues of juveniles that may lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancy.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Community Detention Centers for Girls (CDCs)** - The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to fund the Community Detention Centers for Girls program (CDCs). The services are provided to female juvenile detainees who are remanded to a physically secure facility pending disposition or placement. The services provided, include: education, medical treatment as necessary, life skills development, substance abuse counseling, and recreational activities. The goal of the services provided is to foster positive behaviors that will help the clients to make better life choices in the future. The costs being claimed under TANF include the support services that address a client's risky behaviors, while the residential costs, medical costs and educational costs are excluded from the claim. There are no income guidelines for this program. There are no income guidelines for this program. This program is utilizes federal TANF funds.

This program is in support of the third purpose of the TANF program, because it provides services that address the risky behaviors of the females who have been remanded, that can lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancy.



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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)  
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**SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) - Problem Gambling Services Program** - The Connecticut Lottery Corporation created the "Connecticut Partnership for Responsible Gambling" (the Partnership). The Partnership is designed to educate consumers on problem gambling, underage gambling, and to promote responsible play. The Partnership also serves as a leading resource for responsible gambling, warning signs of problem gambling and available treatment services. The Connecticut Lottery Corporation supports this effort through a \$1.2 million annual contribution to the DMHAS Problem Gambling Services Program.

Through the Problem Gambling Services program, DMHAS provides counseling, assessment, financial management counseling, and peer counseling. They also provide gambling prevention services and perform advocacy work. The program operates in 15 sites throughout the State, which are either State-operated or operated by private non-for-profit organizations.

This program encourages the formation and maintenance of two-parent families. (TANF purpose 4). The program addresses problem gambling, which can be a source of family separation and can be a contributing cause of lack of parental support. The ACF "Guide on Funding Services for Children and Families through the TANF Program" notes "some activities that are reasonably calculated to accomplish (Purpose 4) might include...initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood and increase the capacity of fathers to provide emotional and financial support for their children." (Page 11 of the Guide). The same premise would hold for mothers, as well as fathers. A recent study of the Problem Gambling Services program showed that many of the clients are married and that pathological gambling does lead to negative social and financial outcomes, such as divorce and unemployment.

There are no income guidelines for this program.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Department of Mental Retardation Family Support Program** - The Department of Mental Retardation administers a program called the Family Support Program that makes grants to low and moderate income families that have children diagnosed with mental retardation. The goal is to support persons with mental retardation to live with their families in their communities. A family can use the cash grants of \$250 per month to help defray the extraordinary costs involved with raising a child who has a significant disability. Families use the funds to purchase items and services such as supplements, diapers, and education material not covered by insurance or other funding sources. As such, these grants do not represent 'basic income support' and therefore do not meet the criteria for "assistance".

These services support TANF Purpose 1, - to provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Department of Mental Retardation Respite Grant Program** - The Department of Mental Retardation administers a program called the Respite Grant program. This program makes grants to families that have children who are diagnosed with mental retardation. The purpose of the grants is to enable the families to purchase respite services from private providers; the respite service include in-home respite care and temporary out-of-home respite care. "Respite" provides time for the family to re-energize, deal with emergency situations, or engage in activities that may be neglected as a result of the ongoing demands of caring for a family member who has mental retardation. The goal of the respite program is to support persons with mental retardation to live with their families in their communities. Respite grants range from \$230 per year to \$2,000 per year depending on need. These grants do not represent 'basic income support' and therefore do not meet the criteria for "assistance".

These services support TANF Purpose 1, - to provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)  
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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Department of Mental Retardation State Respite Center Program** - The Department of Mental Retardation administers respite care through DMR staff and through contract with private providers. These services provide temporary out-of-home relief to families with children who are diagnosed with mental retardation. The purpose of providing temporary (e.g., one to seven days) out-of-home respite is to enable the family to re-energize, deal with emergency situations, or engage in activities that may be neglected as a result of the ongoing demands of caring for a family member who has mental retardation. The goal of the respite program is to support persons with mental retardation to live with their families in their communities.

These services support TANF Purpose 1, - to provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Juvenile Justice Centers (JJs)** - The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to fund the Juvenile Justice Centers (JJs). The Juvenile Justice Centers are center-based programs that rely heavily on local community partnerships and agreements to serve juvenile delinquents and their families. The juveniles and their families receive services that include counseling, academic support, recreation, and life skills development. The youth also participate in community service. The length of stay in the program is typically 3 to 6 months and the reporting requirements are 3 to 6 times weekly, including Saturdays and Holidays. The goal of the programming is to foster positive behaviors that will help clients to make better life choices in the future. Educational costs to provide juveniles with a school board approved basic education are excluded from the TANF claim.

The juveniles targeted by this program are those who are at high risk for continued involvement with the juvenile justice system. There are no income guidelines for this program. There are no income guidelines for this program. This program is utilizes federal TANF funds.

This program is in support of the third purpose of the TANF program, because it provides services that address at-risk behaviors that can lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancy.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Juvenile Supervision and Reporting Centers (JSRCs)** - The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to fund the Juvenile Supervision and Reporting Centers (JSRCs). This program targets juveniles who would otherwise be committed to the Department of Children and Families for delinquency, but who can be served and supervised through this intensive community-based program. These centers provide day reporting programs, where the youth are required to report for at least 8 to 12 hours per day for anywhere from 6 to 12 months. While at these centers, the youth receive services designed to address their at-risk behaviors, such as: individual and family counseling, substance abuse intervention and treatment, and case management. The youth are also involved in community service and structured recreation. The costs incurred under this program to provide a basic education, as approved by the local school board, are excluded from the program costs claimed under TANF. There are no income guidelines for this program. There are no income guidelines for this program. This program is utilizes federal TANF funds.

This program is in support of the third purpose of the TANF program, which is to reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy, because it provides services that address the risky behaviors of the youth involved.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Striving Toward Achievement, Renewal and Success program (STARS) -**

The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch to fund the Striving Toward Achievement, Renewal and Success program (STARS). This is a gender-specific program for women age 16 and older who have been involved with the criminal justice system. The goal of the STARS program is to help address the issues that have contributed to the destructive, risky behaviors of these women. It is these risky behaviors that can often lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancy (some of the participants already have a child/ren). The program environment is positive, safe, and trusting and helps to foster self-esteem and motivation among the participants in the program with the intention that they will ultimately make better life choices. There are no income guidelines for this program. This program is utilizes federal TANF funds.

This program is in support of the third purpose of the TANF program, which is to reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy.

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SERVICES AND NON-ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

**Truancy Services** - The General Assembly appropriates funds annually to the Judicial Branch to fund Truancy Services programs. These funds are distributed across several juvenile service providers as part of their larger budget amount and the goal of these funds is to support truancy prevention efforts. Truancy is one of the first indicators in negative juvenile behavior. Students who become truant are likely engaged in at-risk behaviors and participating in unsupervised activities that may result in out-of-wedlock pregnancy. There are no income guidelines for this program. There are no income guidelines for this program. This program is utilizes federal TANF funds.

This program is in support of the third purpose of the TANF program, which is to reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancy.



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STATE PLAN**

**SECTION A**

**PART II**

**WORK REQUIREMENTS**

(ii) – This part describes how the state intends to require a parent or caretaker relative receiving assistance under the program to engage in work (as defined by the state) once the state determines the parent or caretaker is ready to engage in work, or once the parent or caretaker has received assistance under the program for 24 months (whether or not consecutive), whichever is earlier.

**Work Requirements**

Upon entering the time-limited program all adult recipients must participate in work activities, unless specifically exempted by state regulation. A person is exempt if he or she is incapacitated; age 60 or older; responsible for the care of an incapacitated family member; a non-parent caretaker relative who does not receive assistance; caring for a child under the age of one who is not subject to the family cap; pregnant or postpartum if a physician has certified that she is unable to work; or unemployable. Minor parents are exempt if attending and satisfactorily completing high school or high school equivalency programs.

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**EFFECTIVE DATE** 10/1/02

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**SECTION A**

**PART III**

**WORK ACTIVITIES**

**(iii) – This part describes how the state intends to ensure that parents and caretakers receiving assistance under the program engage in work activities in accordance with section 407.**

Recipients are required to engage in work activities as prescribed by their employability plans. Failure to participate without good cause results in a penalty being imposed on the entire family.

During the twenty-one month time limit, the penalty for not participating becomes progressively more severe. For the first instance of failure to participate, the penalty is a 25% reduction in the family's TFA payment for three months. For the second instance of non-compliance, the penalty is a 35% reduction in the TFA payment for three months. For all subsequent instances of non-compliance during the twenty-one month time limit, the penalty is ineligibility for TFA payments for three months. Also, when the adult who fails to comply is the only recipient of TFA, the entire case is ineligible for benefits for the first, second and third offense. The three months that the family does not receive TFA payments do not count in determining twenty-one months of time limited eligibility.

If the family is penalized more than one time during the twenty-one month time limit, they do not qualify for an extension of TFA benefits. No future extension is allowed unless the family experiences special circumstances such as domestic violence.

If a family fails to participate without good cause during an extension, the penalty is ineligibility for the remainder of the extension period. No future extension is allowed unless the family experiences special circumstances such as domestic violence.

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STATE PLAN

**SECTION A**

**PART IV**

**SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION**

**(iv) – This part describes how the state intends to take such reasonable steps as the state deems necessary to restrict the use and disclosure of information about individuals and families receiving assistance under the program attributable to funds provided by the Federal Government.**

The use and disclosure of information about individuals and families receiving assistance under the program is restricted. The department releases information concerning recipients only for purposes directly connected with the administration of the department's programs; an investigation, prosecution, or civil or criminal proceeding related to the administration of the department's program; the administration of any other federal or federally assisted program which provides assistance in cash, or in kind, or services directly to individuals on the basis of need; certification of receipt of assistance to an employer for the purposes of claiming a tax credit; an audit or similar activity conducted in connection with the administration of the program by any governmental entity authorized by law to conduct such audit or activity. The department also discloses, upon request by law enforcement officers, the address of any recipient who is wanted on charges of a felony or high misdemeanor or who is violation of parole or probation. Any suspected cases of child neglect or abuse are reported to the Department of Children and Families.

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**SECTION A**

**PART V**

**TEEN-PREGNANCY PREVENTION**

**(v) – This part describes how the state intends to establish goals and take action to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, with special emphasis on teenage pregnancies, and establish numerical goals for reducing the illegitimacy ratio of the state (as defined in section 403(a)(2)(B)) for calendar years 1996 through 2005.**

The Department of Social Services funds twelve pregnancy prevention programs that include a component that requires the grantees to work more intensively with at risk teens of both sexes. Programs include components to comprehensively address family issues including health, education and other life issues.

The department has contracted with a program evaluator to ascertain which program methods, or aspects of different programs are most effective. The department has also contracted with the University of Connecticut Health Center to act as coordinator of the various teenage pregnancy prevention efforts across the state. In this capacity, the health center provides technical assistance and information and works with state agencies to minimize duplicated efforts and to secure current data.

The department worked with the Department of Public Health to include the collection of marital status information on birth certificates to allow more accurate data collection on out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Numerical goals were established in collaboration with the Connecticut Progress Council to reduce the number of out-of-wedlock births. The Progress Council has a specific goal of reducing the teen pregnancy rate to twenty-three births per one thousand girls aged 15 to 17. (The Connecticut Progress Council was created under state law to establish goals for the future and benchmarks to measure the state's progress in meeting them).

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**SECTION A**

**PART VI**

**STATUTORY RAPE**

**(vi) – This part describes how the state intends to conduct a program, designed to reach state and local law enforcement officials, the education system, and relevant counseling services, that provides education and training on the problem of statutory rape so that teenage pregnancy prevention programs may be expanded in scope to include men.**

The Governor has declared that statutory rape laws be enforced throughout the state and convened an interagency group to develop a protocol for referral of statutory rape cases. He has appointed a special prosecutor to enforce the statutory rape laws in Hartford. Hartford is the city with the highest teen birth rate in the state. In addition, the Department of Social Services has notified all of its employees that information pertaining to any possible case of statutory rape should be referred to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) for investigation of possible child abuse. DCF may further refer the case to the Chief State's Attorney's Office for prosecution. DSS also encourages the victim and her family to report the case to the Chief State's Attorney's Office.

DSS together with the Department of Public Health completed a media campaign with two focuses. The first was to educate women about their rights and the statutory rape laws. The second focus targeted young men to inform them that statutory rape is a crime in Connecticut and will be prosecuted. Brochures were developed and distributed to schools and local community agencies.

Teen-pregnancy prevention programs funded by DSS work intensively with young men as well as young women to address issues of health, education and other life issues.

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STATE PLAN**

**SECTION B**

**PART I**

**TREATMENT OF FAMILIES MOVING INTO THE STATE**

**Sec. 402(a)(1)(B)**

**(i) – This part indicates whether the state intends to treat families moving into the state from another state differently than other families under the program, and if so, how the state intends to treat such families under the program.**

The state does not treat families moving into the state from another state differently than other families under the program.

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**SECTION B**

**PART II**

**TREATMENT OF NON-CITIZENS**

**(ii) - This part indicates whether the state intends to provide assistance under the program to individuals who are not citizens of the United States, and if so, shall include an overview of such assistance.**

Connecticut provides assistance to mandatory and optional qualified aliens, as defined in Title IV of P.L. 104 - 193. All eligibility requirements, level of benefits and other provisions that pertain to U.S. citizens also apply to these non-citizens.

Optional qualified aliens are required to live in the state for six months prior to applying for assistance. This requirement does not apply to mandatory qualified aliens, victims of domestic violence or persons with mental retardation.

Aliens determined eligible for assistance must pursue citizenship to the extent possible. This requirement does not apply to victims of domestic violence or persons with mental retardation.

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STATE PLAN

**SECTION B**

**PART III**

**OBJECTIVE CRITERIA**

**(iii) – This part sets forth objective criteria for the delivery of the benefits and the determination of eligibility and for fair and equitable treatment, including an explanation of how the state will provide opportunities for recipients who have been adversely affected to be heard in a state administrative or appeal process.**

**Connecticut's Objective Criteria**

The State of Connecticut has developed objective criteria for the delivery of benefits, the determination of eligibility, and for fair and equitable treatment. These criteria are described in official state policies and regulations. The policies and regulations have been legally adopted under applicable provisions of state law.

Connecticut's objective criteria for delivery of benefits and determination of eligibility for TFA include standards of promptness for the determination of eligibility, periodic reviews of eligibility, standards of verification, determination of good cause for not complying with employment services requirements, and treatment and limits on income and resources.

The standard of promptness is forty-five days from the date of application for inactive cases. If the family applies for an extension of benefits before the end of the twenty-one month time limit or extension, the standard of promptness is 30 days.

Periodic reviews of eligibility are every twelve months and in the twentieth month of the time limit.

Documents are the primary sources of verification. Affidavits are accepted when other sources of verification are not available. The preponderance of evidence is the department's standard of verification.

Good cause for non-compliance with and employment services activity is defined as circumstances beyond a person's control that reasonably prevent a person from participating in an activity.

Earned income of recipients is totally excluded up to the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Once earnings reach the FPL, the family becomes ineligible for



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STATE PLAN**

assistance. Unearned income must be less than the department's standard of need for a family to be eligible for TFA.

The resource limit is \$3,000. Families are allowed to own a vehicle with an equity value less than \$9,500 or a vehicle used to transport a handicapped family member.

Benefits are paid through electronic benefits transfer into an account that may be accessed by the eligible family. The department may limit a person's control over an account through restricted payment or by providing payment directly to a third party when it has been determined that the person has mismanaged his or her finances.

**Connecticut's Appeals Process**

Connecticut provides timely and adequate notice prior to taking an adverse action and provides opportunities for the recipients who have been adversely affected to be heard in a state administered appeals process. There are set time limits for requesting and holding hearings and issuing decisions. Hearings are presented before impartial hearing officers. Clients are allowed to present a case, bring witnesses, ask questions and cross-examine. If the client is unhappy with the decision, he or she may request reconsideration or appeal to the courts.

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**SECTION B**

**PART IV**

**WORK OPTION**

(iv) - Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, unless the chief executive officer of the state opts out of this provision by notifying the Secretary, a state shall, consistent with the exception provided in section 407(e)(2), require a parent or caretaker receiving assistance under the program who, after receiving assistance for 2 months is not exempt from work requirements and is not engaged in work, as determined under section 407(c), to participate in community service employment, with minimum hours per week and tasks to be determined by the state.

On September 25, 1996, the Governor sent a letter to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to opt out of this provision. While the state will continue to use community service as a work activity, requiring every parent or caretaker do it after two months of assistance is not consistent with the design of the Jobs First program.

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TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)  
STATE PLAN**

**SECTION C  
CERTIFICATIONS**

**STATE PLAN CERTIFICATIONS**

The State of Connecticut will operate a program to provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) so that the children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives; to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

The Chief Executive Officer of the state is Governor John G. Rowland.

**CERTIFICATION THAT THE STATE WILL OPERATE A CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM**

The state will operate a child support enforcement program under the State Plan approved under part D.

**CERTIFICATION THAT THE STATE WILL OPERATE A FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The state will operate a foster care and adoption assistance program under the State Plan approved under part E, and the state will take such actions as are necessary to ensure that children receiving assistance under such part are eligible for medical assistance under the State Plan under title XIX.

**CERTIFICATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM**

The Department of Social Services is the agency responsible for the administration and supervision of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

The state has given local governments and private sector organizations the opportunity to comment on the design of the services provided by the program described in this plan. The department also gives notice and seeks comments from the public any time it amends its regulations.

**DATE SUBMITTED** 12/31/02

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**SECTION C**  
**CERTIFICATIONS**

Any one wishing to comment has had at least 45 days to submit comments on the substance of the plan and the design of such services.

**CERTIFICATION THAT THE STATE WILL PROVIDE INDIANS WITH  
EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ASSISTANCE**

The state will provide each member of an Indian tribe, who is domiciled in the state and not eligible for assistance under a tribal family assistance plan approved under section 412, with equitable access to assistance under the state program funded under this part attributable to funds provided by the federal government.

**CERTIFICATION OF STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES TO ENSURE  
AGAINST PROGRAM FRAUD AND ABUSE**

The state has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to insure against program fraud and abuse, including standards and procedures concerning nepotism, conflicts of interest among individuals responsible for the administration and supervision of the state program, kickbacks, and the use of political patronage.

**OPTIONAL CERTIFICATION OF STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES TO  
ENSURE THAT THE STATE WILL SCREEN FOR AND IDENTIFY DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE**

Although standards and procedures have been developed to ensure that the state will screen for and identify domestic violence, Connecticut has decided not to include this optional certification at this time

Certified by the Governor of Connecticut

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
John G. Rowland

**DATE SUBMITTED** 12/31/02

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)  
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**ADDENDUM A**  
**TEMPORARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE PAYMENT STANDARDS**

1. The State of Connecticut is divided into three geographic regions on the basis of similarity in the cost of living.
2. Separate TFA payment levels are established for each region.
3. The regional breakdown of the state by cities and towns is as follows

**Region A**

Bethel	Greenwich	Norwalk	Stamford
Bridgewater	New Canaan	Redding	Washington
Brookfield	New Fairfield	Ridgefield	Weston
Danbury	New Milford	Roxbury	Westport
Darien	Newtown	Sherman	Wilton

**Region B**

Andover	East Haven	Marlborough	Simsbury
Ashford	East Lyme	Meriden	Somers
Avon	Easton	Middlefield	Southington
Berlin	East Windsor	Middletown	South Windsor
Bethany	Ellington	Milford	Sprague
Bloomfield	Enfield	Monroe	Stafford
Bolton	Essex	Montville	Sterling
Bozrah	Fairfield	New Britain	Stonington
Branford	Farmington	New Haven	Stratford
Bridgeport	Franklyn	Newington	Suffield
Bristol	Glastonbury	New London	Thompson
Brooklyn	Granby	North Branford	Tolland
Burlington	Griswold	North Haven	Trumbull
Canterbury	Groton	N.Stonington	Union
Canton	Guilford	Norwich	Vernon
Chaplin	Haddam	Old Lyme	Voluntown
Chester	Hamden	Old Saybrook	Wallingford
Clinton	Hampton	Orange	Waterford
Colchester	Hartford	Plainfield	Westbrook
Columbia	Hebron	Plainville	West Hartford
Coventry	Killingly	Plymouth	West Haven
Cromwell	Killingworth	Pomfret	Wethersfield
Deep River	Lebanon	Portland	Willington
Durham	Ledyard	Preston	Windsor
Eastford	Lisbon	Putnam	Windsor Locks
East Granby	Lyme	Rocky Hill	Woodbridge
East Haddam	Madison	Salem	Woodstock
East Hampton	Manchester	Scotland	
East Hartford	Mansfield	Shelton	

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**ADDENDUM A**

**TEMPORARY FAMILY ASSISTANCE PAYMENT STANDARDS**

**Region C**

Ansonia	Goshen	Norfolk	Torrington
Barkhamsted	Hartland	North Canaan	Warren
Beacon Falls	Harwinton	Oxford	Waterbury
Bethlehem	Kent	Prospect	Watertown
Canaan	Litchfield	Salisbury	Winchester
Cheshire	Middlebury	Seymour	Wolcott
Colebrook	Morris	Sharon	Woodbury
Cornwall	Naugatuck	Southbury	
Derby	New Hartford	Thomaston	

<b>Family Size</b>	<b><u>Region A</u></b>	<b><u>Region B</u></b>	<b><u>Region C</u></b>
1	\$402	\$333	\$333
2	513	443	443
3	636	543	536
4	741	639	622
5	835	731	708
6	935	827	805
7	1,040	933	904
8	1,143	1,031	1,001
9	1,228	1,116	1,086
10	1,341	1,220	1,209

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